

# Alabama Board of Physical Therapy

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bile**

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**Stephen N. Dodd**

**Assistant Attorney General**

## **Board Staff:**

**N.K. Horner      Executive Director**

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## **FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR -**

From the beginning, Kathryn Brown has been at the helm of the Alabama Board of Physical Therapy. At the present time, she is thoroughly enjoying her retirement, as it affords her time to explore other avenues of interest.

And now a new Executive Director is on board, seeking to follow in Kathryn's footsteps. My name is Nettie Katharin Horner, but I prefer to be called N.K. As my professional background is in speech pathology, I have a healthy appreciation for the licensing aspect of this work. I worked in the Therapy Department at Baptist Hospital many years ago and experienced first hand what Physical Therapists and Assistants do. I have only once been on the receiving end of physical therapy, though. I am enjoying opportunities to talk with many of you by phone and getting to meet several of you at the Spring APTA Meeting at Orange Beach. I wish I could know ALL of you personally! Maybe when I have been here as long as Kathryn was, I will at least know most of your names.

The Board Office is here for you; we welcome your phone calls and your requests for information. We're in the process of gearing up for the renewal period and plan to have notices in the mail August 1. That should give you plenty of time to renew your license before October 1.

Theodore Roosevelt once said, *"Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing."* And I am grateful for the chance to work hard in this position, for it is most assuredly work worth doing!

N. K. Horner





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## **READY OR NOT**

The Alabama Board of Physical Therapy is proud to announce that it has successfully completed a three part Jurisprudence exam and is ready to begin administering the test in the spring of 2006. The Board would like to thank all of the participants who helped accomplish this noteworthy goal.

The purpose of the Jurisprudence examination is to measure the licensure candidates' understanding of the current laws and rules that govern safe practice of physical therapy in the State of Alabama. The goal of the test i.e., law and license examination, is to support the Board in its quest to grant licenses to professionals who have an understanding of the rules that govern our profession.

The new examination will be a 50 item test, with 40 items counting towards a passing score and 10 questions designated as pre-test items for future use. A passing score on the examination will be a requirement for all initial licensure, including candidates for endorsement in the State of Alabama.

This entire examination was developed with the direct input of licensed and currently practicing Physical Therapist and Physical Therapist Assistants in the State of Alabama; these included clinicians, educators, and administrators with countless years of experience. The Board considers this a historical advancement for our profession and a reflection of its desire to be proactive, informative, and educational in dealing with its licensees, as opposed to reactive and punitive. The Board takes no pleasure in disciplining clinicians for failure to comply with the law due to lack of knowledge or misinterpretation of basic practice standards.

The Board is thrilled to have the opportunity to join only a handful of states in implementing a Jurisprudence examination for the benefit of its licensees.

Wiley J. Christian III, P.T.  
(Secretary)

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Licensure Statistics (As of July 26, 2005)

Licensed in Alabama

PT's 1,710

PTA's 1,356

**CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE**

**[www.pt.alabama.gov](http://www.pt.alabama.gov)**

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## LICENSE RENEWAL “GRACE PERIOD” NO LONGER APPLICABLE

Licensees need to be aware of a change in the rules dealing with license renewal. Previously, Rule 700-X-2-.09(1) of the *Alabama Administrative Code* provided that PT and PTA licenses expired on October 1 of a given year. If they had not done so prior to October 1, licensees were given a one-month “grace period” -- from October 1 to November 1 -- to submit their renewal materials without penalty.

This rule, and this process, has been changed. *Effective March 10, 2005, there no longer is a “grace period” under Rule 700-X-2-.09(1).*

What this means to licensees is that license renewal materials will have to be *received in the Board’s offices by September 30* in order to be in compliance. If renewal materials are not received by September 30<sup>th</sup>, the licensee will be in a position of practicing without a license until the materials are received.

As a practical matter, this means that licensees need to submit their renewal materials early. ***Please do not wait until the last minute.*** In the past, when a licensee has been late renewing his/her license, this “lateness” has resulted in disciplinary actions and fines that are never welcome, and easily avoided.

For more information about the change in license renewal timing, contact the Board at (334) 242-4064, or check out the Board’s web site at [www.pt.alabama.gov](http://www.pt.alabama.gov).

Steve Dodd  
Legal counsel,  
Board of Physical Therapy

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## FAREWELL

The board bids farewell to Herb Caillouet; after faithfully serving for ten years on the board, his tenure will end October 1, 2005. Herb’s knowledge and expertise in the scope of practice and documentation issues has been a genuine asset. He will be missed.



**Board Meeting**  
**August 18, 2005**  
**RSA Union Building 7th Floor Ste. 724**  
**Montgomery Alabama 36130**

## PROPOSED CEU RULE CHANGE

The possibility of a rules change was submitted to the State Board by licensees in September, 2004, proposing that Continuing Education Units (CEU's) in excess of the ten (10) hours required for physical therapists and in excess of the six (6) hours required for physical therapist assistants be carried forward to the next twelve (12) month compliance period. After lengthy discussion of this proposal, the Board voted in favor of the rule change.

The process to amend the existing requirement for CEU's involves the addition of a rule in the *State of Alabama Board of Physical Therapy Administrative Code Section 700-X-2-.09(3)(b)* that would read as follows:

Hours earned by a physical therapist in excess of ten (10) hours during a compliance period, and hours earned by a physical therapist assistant in excess of six (6) hours during a compliance period, may be carried forward into the next compliance period; but, no more than ten (10) hours may be carried forward by a physical therapist, and no more than six (6) hours may be carried forward by a physical therapist assistant.

The compliance period for continuing education and license renewal is October 1 through September 30 of every year. A copy of the continuing education certificate must be included with the current license renewal application and fees. If hours earned are to be carried forward, **another copy** of the certificate should be maintained by the licensee to be included with the license renewal application for the following compliance period.

The Board office **will not** keep track of hours earned that are to be carried over. This responsibility lies with each licensee. The new rule change will not become effective until the compliance period of 2006.

Continuing education course brochures that do not indicate Alabama State Board approval should be submitted to the Board office for approval *prior* to course dates. Course content and outline may be faxed to the Board office for review.

All licensees are reminded that physical therapy licenses expire on September 30, with no grace period. If you do not have a current license in hand on October 1, and you work as a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant, you will be in violation of the law. Licensure renewal past this date will include the regular renewal fees plus a restoration fee of fifty dollars (\$50.00) to reinstate the license. Working without a valid license in the state of Alabama also constitutes fines of up to \$500.00.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mitzi Tuttle, PTA  
Board Member

